

REMARKS

In a final Office Action dated September 8, 2009, claims 1, 3-6, 10, and 20-31 of the above-identified patent application were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,632,191 ("Headley"). Claims 7 and 13 were rejected as being unpatentable over Headley in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,743,192 ("Sakota").

To further clarify the present subject matter, all of the independent claims 1, 20, and 28 are amended to specify that separate portions of whole blood are centrifugally processed before and after the blood source is disconnected.

As has been described in previous Responses, Headley fails to teach or otherwise suggest a method of flowing quantities of whole blood into two locations. In the "prior art" system of Fig. 1 of Headley, blood from a donor is flowed into a collection bag 12 and centrifugally processed therein after the donor has been disconnected from the system. In the system of Fig. 3 of Headley, blood from a donor is flowed into a rotor 21 for centrifugal processing. Very clearly, in each of the systems described in Headley, whole blood is maintained in a single quantity and flowed into a single centrifugal processing location.

In each of the systems described in Headley, a separated blood component is removed from the centrifugal processing location and passed through a filter 17 for removal of white blood cells. This is different from the methods recited in the independent claims because the secondary processing step is: (1) performed on a separated blood component instead of a quantity of whole blood and (2) a non-centrifugal processing step. Combining the two systems of Headley would not have made it obvious to employ separate centrifugation steps on separate quantities of whole blood because there is a simple 1:1 correlation between the system components and steps of the Figs. 1 and 3 systems. Hence, a combination of the two systems described in Headley (regardless of which particular components and method steps are taken from each) would logically follow the same general method of: collecting a single quantity of blood in a single location, centrifugally separating the entire quantity of

blood, and then passing a subset of the separated blood component through a filter to non-centrifugally remove white blood cells.

Therefore, even assuming that the bag 12/rotor 21 and filter 17 of the systems described in Headley are separate processing locations per the independent claims, they are different from the claimed methods for the foregoing reasons. Because the prior art identified in the Office Action fails to teach or suggest the claimed subject matter or otherwise render it obvious, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of independent claims 1, 20, and 28 (and the claims dependent therefrom) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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